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ABSTRACT

The Oklahoma State Department of Education's plan for staff development is based on the premise that a systematic inservice program is one of the most productive means to improve the professional competencies of school staffs. This plan is intended to help local agencies develop their own programs while meeting federal and state standards, eliminating duplication of resources, and providing for a continuum between preservice and inservice training. The plan includes guidelines on such topics as delivery systems, program evaluation, funding, coordination, needs assessment, and incentives. (WD)

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OKLAHOMA STATE PLAN

for

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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EA 014 233

A. INTRODUCTION

Perhaps one of the most unique characteristics of any profession is the demand placed on the members to continue some form of study throughout their professional careers. Educators, as professionals, must also continue to build knowledge and skills which allow them to address current problems or issues in today's society which tend to strongly impact public schools. Declining enrollments, stabilized teaching forces, reduction of purchasing power, increased public involvement in education and a demand for greater accountability are but a few areas which must be addressed daily by school systems to insure that the best possible education is provided for a given student population.

One of the most productive means to meet these demands and improve professional competencies of school staffs is a systematic staff development inservice program. Research and actual practice in other states confirms that most individuals are willing to take part in professional instructional programs if it can be demonstrated that the inservice being provided is relevant to their particular needs.

The following staff development plan is based on several assumptions:

(1) that staff development is a shared responsibility

(2) that staff development is a continuous and essential function of successful careers in public education

(3) that staff development is a means for improving the competency of school staffs

(4) that staff development is a means for integrating and relating college preparation to the needs of a local school system.

Based on these assumptions, inherent in the Oklahoma Staff Development Plan is:

(1) coordination and efficient utilization of resources

(2) shared responsibility and collaboration of the local school systems, school staffs, institutions of higher education, professional associations and the State Department of Education

(3) a means for local education agencies to provide a method for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of all educational personnel and support staff in meeting the identified needs of a given student population

(4) allowance for local and/or regionally planned inservice activities

(5) allowance for local and/or regional delivery of inservice programs

(6) the mechanism for coordinating all federal inservice components

(7) the commitment to coordinate all inservice activities conducted within and by the state agency

B. GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The primary inservice goal of the State Department of Education is to initiate, in cooperative partnership with other agencies and institutions, (e.g. institutions of higher education, professional organizations) a statewide comprehensive and flexible staff development plan which provides for alternative delivery systems, resulting in improvements in the quality of student educational experiences.

The objectives of the state plan are:

(1) to assist local education agencies in developing comprehensive, needs based inservice programs

(2) to assist the state agency and local systems in meeting federal/state regulations relevant to inservice education

(3) to insure proper utilization of resources to eliminate duplication of effort

(4) to assist both the state and local education agencies in designing inservice programs which provide for maximum utilization of state, federal and local fiscal resources

(5) to provide for a continuum between preservice and inservice training

C. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Oklahoma Statutes provide the legal basis for the State Department of Education to function in a leadership capacity relative to staff development.

Referring to the Oklahoma Statutes, Title 70, Section 1-105, (A) states:

> "The State Department of Education is that department of the state government in which the agencies created or authorized by the Constitution and Legislature are placed and charged with the responsibility of determining the policies and directing the administration and supervision of the public school system of the state . . . ."
>
> Title 70, Section 1-105, (B) states: "The State Board of Education is that agency in the State Department of Education which shall be the governing board of said Department and the public school system of the state."
>
> Title 70, Section 1-115, says: "The public school system in Oklahoma shall be administered by the State Department of Education, State Superintendent of Schools, county superintendent of schools, boards of education of school districts, and superintendents of independent school districts."
>
> Title 70, Section 3-104 states: "The control of the State Department of Education and the supervision of the public school system of Oklahoma shall be vested in the State Board of Education and, subject to limitations otherwise provided by law, the State Board of Education shall . . . .;
>
> (2) Adopt policies and make rules and regulations for the operation of the State Department of Education and the public

school system of the state . . . .;

(9) Have full and exclusive authority in all matters pertaining to standards of qualifications and the certification of persons for instructional, supervisory, and administrative positions and services in the public schools of the state, and shall formulate rules and regulations governing the issuance and revocation of certificates for county superintendents of schools, district superintendents of schools, principals, supervisors, librarians, clerical employees, school nurses, school bus drivers, visiting teachers, classroom teachers and other employees who do not work directly with pupils, ...;

(11) Be the legal agent of the State of Oklahoma to accept, in its discretion, the provisions of any Act of Congress appropriating or apportioning funds which are now, or may hereafter be, provided for use in connection with any phase of the system of public education in Oklahoma. It shall prescribe such regulations as it finds necessary to provide for the proper distribution of such funds in accordance with the state and federal laws, ...;

(23) Have the authority and is hereby required to perform all duties necessary to the administration of the public school system in Oklahoma as specified in the Oklahoma School Code; and in addition thereto, those duties not specifically mentioned herein if not delegated by law to any other agency or official, ...

Federal and state legislation recognizes the need for provisions to insure that school staff have the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to meet new legislative mandates. Meeting the needs of the handicapped child under P.L. 94-142, may call for the restructuring of existing programs and/or retraining of personnel in some school systems. As a state supplement to P.L. 94-142, Senate Bill 581 (Prescriptive Teaching Act of 1974) makes provisions for inservice programs to assist educators working with students with special needs. There are many other pieces of legislation which contain staff development components. Currently, P.L. 95-561 requires a comprehensive staff development plan which describes the coordination of federal and state funds for educational personnel including preservice and inservice training. As cited in Provision (11) above, the State Department of Education

has the responsibility for any Act of Congress from which the state is receiving federal funds for public education.

Acting in an advisory capacity to the State Board of Education and established under Title 70, Section 6-125 of the Oklahoma Statutes, the Professional Standards Board provides leadership for the improvement of teacher education and standards for the certification of teachers and other educational personnel in Oklahoma. One aspect of the board's responsibility includes encouraging studies and research designed to improve teacher education, including continuing education of teachers.

It is therefore evident that the state agency has the responsibility for the development, implementation, and assurance of compliance with the above cited laws for both inservice and preservice programs in the public school systems of the state. However, the agency recognizes the need for collaborative efforts in both inservice and preservice programs. The success of all training programs for educators must be a shared responsibility of the agency, local school systems, institutions of higher education, local school staffs and professional associations if indeed the training goal is to assist school staffs in meeting the needs of a given student population.

C.1 Governance

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is responsible for carrying out the provisions of these laws and to assure compliance with legislation. To assure compliance the State Superintendent of Public Instruction will appoint a State Advisory Council and Coordinator for Staff Development. The Coordinator for Staff Development and the State Advisory Council will be responsible for implementation of the plan and reporting the success of the plan to the Legislature, the State Board of Education and the people.

C.1.1 State Advisory Council

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction will appoint a State Advisory Council for improving the professional performance of all school staff. The State Advisory Council shall have the following duties:

(1) Make recommendations to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for the implementation of this plan;

(2) Provide a continuous liaison and communication function between the cooperating organizations carrying out this plan;

(3) Assist in the effort to increase resources in all forms of delivery systems that are involved in preservice and inservice education in the state;

(4) Study and make recommendations for continued refinement and improvements of the Oklahoma plan;

(5) Monitor program planning, evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and submit an annual report to the State Board of Education.

C.1.2 Membership of the State Advisory Council

Membership of the Council shall be comprised of an equitable representation of various races, sex, and ethnic backgrounds which takes into account instruction, school support services, professional organizations, teacher education, lay involvement, State Department of Education and other agencies.

C.1.3 Coordinator for Staff Development

A Coordinator for Staff Development shall be appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to exercise the following duties:

(1) Prepare agenda, minutes and other reports for the State Advisory Council.

(2) Continually review the staff development plan in relation to its

capacity in meeting the needs for inservice in the state and its compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations.

(3) Coordinate and communicate information relative to department funded and sponsored staff development activities.

(4) Provide for coordination of data collection relative to the status of inservice staff development in the participating agencies throughout the state.

(5) Arrange for on-site visits to evaluate the success of local staff development plans.

(6) Serve as liaison between all participating units in matters relating to preservice and inservice staff development and implementation of the Oklahoma plan.

(7) Coordinate preservice and inservice activities that meet needs that have been identified.

C.1.4 Preservice Education

The State of Oklahoma uses an "approved program approach" to certification of teachers and other professional school personnel. This process refers to the approval of teacher education programs within an institution of higher education. The State Board of Education has designated the Section of Teacher Education as the section responsible for directing, coordinating, and evaluating teacher education programs across the state. The approval process includes on-site visitations to the institutions for the purpose of evaluating each certificate program offered by the institution. The program approval process provides the mechanism needed to insure that teacher education programs in institutions of higher education meet state minimum requirements for certification as established by the State Board of Education. The Coordinator for Staff Development will identify and develop programs that address

preservice and inservice activities for the educational personnel of the state.

The coordination of preservice and inservice programs will be threefold:

(1) As training needs are identified this data will be disseminated to the institutions of higher education so that preservice programs can more fully address needs of public school personnel.

(2) In order to meet the needs of local level educational personnel, institutions of higher learning will serve as one means of delivery systems to provide local inservice training.

(3) As staff development needs are identified, the cost of funding of programs to meet these needs will be coordinated in such a way as to best utilize all resources.

C.2 Delivery Systems

The delivery system translates the needs for preservice and inservice into activities offered to potential participants. The system will include a variety of cooperative activities and resources which are designed to provide the professional development desired.

Each cooperating agency providing delivery system services shall submit to the State Board of Education annually a list of preservice and inservice opportunities available to the local school districts. The list will include a description of kinds of activities available, prospective dates, locations and target audiences. The State Advisory Council shall meet with delivery system agencies to establish minimum standards relative to hours, tasks, involvement, experiences and other criteria related to products of preservice and inservice activities.

The State Advisory Council will recommend standards which provide for as much comparability among activities as possible. Recommendations will also be developed for dissemination to participating delivery systems and local

schools about criteria and standards as they apply to credits, salary adjustments, promotion, incentives, and rewards.

C.3 Quality Assurance/Evaluation

Quality assurance is monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation may also be thought of as "formative" and "summative" evaluation. Its purpose is to assure the most effectiveness in improving learning by students.

The state will monitor the development and implementation of inservice staff development plans and will evaluate the results of the activities. Results will be disseminated. The state agency will:

(1) Monitor staff development activities.

(2) Coordinate responsibilities for inservice as specified in Legislation and regulations.

(3) Conduct quality assurance activities.

(4) Compile local assessment and results and interpret data to identify priorities of local district plans to establish statewide priorities.

(5) Disseminate inservice staff development information.

(6) Recommend development of state level inservice staff development activities to meet assessed needs.

Each district will have its staff development report reviewed each year by the State Department of Education. A sampling of districts will be scheduled for on-site visits to verify reports and quality assurance. A yearly report to the State Board of Education will be submitted by the State Advisory Council concerning the progress made in the implementation of the staff development plan.

The process of Quality Assurance should not be detailed to the extent that it is burdensome, but should help program personnel be more clear in their roles, to be timely with their actions, and to have their attention

well-focused on achievement and competency. It should not be an exercise in paper work, but still allow creativity at the same time that efficiency is operating.

C.4 Funding/Fiscal Resources

The responsibilities of the State Department of Education will be:

(1) Identify preservice and inservice funding levels of state and federal programs with inservice components.

(2) Coordinate and explain the findings relative to inservice use for categorical funds. Annually, a Budgetary Request from the State Department of Education to the Governor and Legislature includes a request for needed appropriations for staff development from both the state and local level. Any appropriation received from the Oklahoma State Legislature would be disbursed by the State Department of Education to the local education agencies under guidelines, formulae, and distribution methods designed by the State Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education. Recognition would be given to the incentive and motivation expressed by the local education agency in its application for service and funding. Regents for Higher Education who monitor teacher training institutions will be involved in the development and implementation of inservice planning. Commitments from all state agencies will be solicited to supplement resources.

(3) Specify expectations and priorities for annual use of available inservice funds.

(4) Report on expenditures and use of other resources in local school preservice/inservice programs. These resources which include both fiscal and human will be identified and classified in a manner

most expeditious for maximum utilization.

(5) Make recommendations for avoiding duplicatory combinations of of funds from local, state and federal resources. The State Department of Education will provide coordination of both fiscal and human resources and assure services to the various local education agencies on a non-partisan basis.

(6) Work to obtain and coordinate funds for application to preservice/ inservice programs.

The State Department of Education will diligently pursue funding from other federal sources applicable to the inservice practices and will place a high priority on support for inservice from federal discretionary funds.

D. Responsibility of Local Education Agency

Title 70, Section 5-117 of the Oklahoma Statutes provides that:

> "The board of education of each school district shall have the power to elect its own officers; to make rules and regulations, not inconsistent with the law or rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, governing the board and the school system of the district; to maintain and operate a complete public school system of such character as the board of education shall deem best suited to the needs of the school district . . . . ."

Consequently, the implementation of the State Board of Education regulations relating to improving the professional performance of all school staff becomes a responsibility of the local board of education and local school superintendent. It is the responsibility of the local administration to initiate the implementation of this plan at the local school level.

It shall be the responsibility of the local school administration to develop a comprehensive staff development plan for improving the professional performance of all school staff. The local board of education shall adopt rules and regulations for implementation of the plan which are not inconsistent with the law or rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

The local education agency will submit their local staff development plan to the State Board of Education for approval prior to the beginning of the school year. An evaluation report, including an outline of expenditures will be submitted upon completion of a school year. Each local education agency shall provide auditable records regarding the implementation and achievement of the local plan.

D.1 Governance

The primary functions of governance are (1) policy making, and (2) management. For governance to be effective, roles within the two functions must be well-defined and understood by all involved. Characteristics common to sound governance structures are:

(1) The governing board should be representative of the persons affected by the plan;

(2) Roles, functions and powers of the governing board should be specifically defined;

(3) Recommendations of the governing systems should be compatible with the goals and requirements of the plan;

(4) Cost of establishing and maintaining the governing system should be estimated.

D.1.1 Local Advisory Council

A Local Advisory Council will be appointed by the local school board and be representative of all sectors affected by the staff development plan.

The duties of this Council in designing and implementing the local education agency staff development plan include the following:

(1) Periodically review the guidelines for the staff development plan established by the State Department of Education and make

recommendations to the local administration for the implementation of the plan;

(2) Review the needs assessment conducted by the local school system for the purpose of determining staff development inservice programs based upon those needs;

(3) Identify local resources and continually strive toward improvement of the local delivery system for preservice and inservice education for the local staff;

(4) Plan for and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation at the local level.

D.1.2 Membership of the Local Advisory Council

The local school board shall appoint the members of this Council. Persons to be considered for membership should include students, parents, teachers, administrators, support personnel, and higher education representatives.

Membership on this Council should be a fair and equitable distribution of representatives from all sectors of the local school community.

D.1.3 Coordination

Coordination shall be the responsibility of the local administration or one or more persons to whom he/she has delegated this function. Coordination shall involve:

(1) Supervisory assurance that all school district employees are served under the plan;

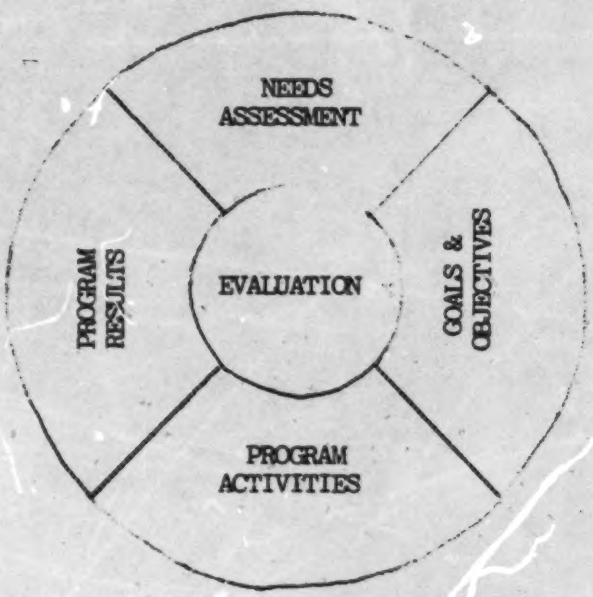
(2) Reporting of plans and activities, forms and other information, and dates/schedules which should be submitted to the State Board of Education in accordance with the state plan;

(3) Assurance of wide involvement and successful implementation of planned activities.

D.2 Needs Assessment

Staff development should be based on the needs of all personnel of a local school district. It is the primary responsibility of that district to develop a list of validated needs which will give direction for the development of program goals and objectives. Program activities are then developed to accomplish stated program objectives. The evaluation interacts with all these stages and suggests direction for new plans and actions.

The display below suggests that there is constant feedback and revision between program evaluation and each of the four areas.



Program evaluation must be developed as an integral part of the staff development program so that it may be determined in measurable terms whether program activities are reaching the objectives and consequently meeting the needs.

The needs assessment should be systematic and include several techniques

of collecting data. The following are suggestions to be considered:

(1) Teacher led, non-administrator interaction group sessions

(2) Surveys of central office staff

(3) Questionnaires and opinion polls of students, staffs, parents, other individuals:

a. open ended

b. checklist

c. combination of open ended and checklist

d. ratings

e. multiple choice

f. rankings

(4) Program-related documents (NCATE, North Central, State Department of Education) on-site visitations

(5) Test scores/achievement records

(6) Personal conferences/interviews

(7) Committee structure/representative

(8) Comparison with state, regional or national standards

(9) Observation of students/general student attitude and behavior

(10) Visitation

(11) Self evaluation/video taping

(12) Written/verbal evaluations

(13) Study of user count, student attendance, and dropout rate

(14) Analysis of educational background and certification of professional personnel

Although local systems are free to select or design methods for assessing needs, no one method is sufficient. Several methods should be utilized to secure

the necessary data for decision making.

The goals and objectives formulated upon an analysis of the needs assessment data should serve as the focus for the design of the staff development program.

Suggested topics/subjects for inservice activities should be placed in priority order. In addition to the staff, it may be desirable to select representatives from outside agencies (State Department of Education, Universities, Regional Service Centers, etc.) to assist with the analysis of the data, prioritize inservice agenda and participate in the inservice program(s).

D. 3 Delivery Systems

The delivery system may include activities supplied at the state, local or other level. The system should identify the most appropriate level to meet the needs of the local staff.

A delivery system will be so designed that each potential user can determine the objectives of the system, types of activities, cost, time, location and as much other information as may be available.

A delivery system shall meet established minimum standards set by the State Department of Education; (i.e. number of hours to complete task, agency commitment to deliver, quality of staff, etc.)

The following list includes suggested activities and/or experiences which may accomplish delivery of the desired product. It is not a comprehensive list, and it is not mandatory that activities be selected from this list but it offers many good examples. More than one activity may be desirable within a delivery system.

(1) College courses

(2) Supervision of clinical experiences (student teaching, etc.)

(3) Attendance at professional meetings

(4) Attendance at lectures by persons with expertise in the areas for which certification is requested

(5) Systematic purposeful observation during visits to schools

(6) Development of demonstrations or curriculum innovations for use with student teachers or in inservice programs

(7) Creative endeavor (art, music, writing) related to the individual's certification

(8) Publication of professional articles in a professional journal in an appropriate field

(9) Travel related to the professional certification areas (prior approval to this experience must be obtained)

(10) Exchange situations to gain experience with students at another age ability, socioeconomic level or in another subject for which the teacher is qualified

(11) Attendance at and participation in inservice meetings with the opportunity for staff members in various roles (college faculty, community persons) to work together

(12) Participation in inservice meetings to include staff planning and involvement (demonstrations with student exhibits, explanation of special or new techniques)

(13) Direct involvement, individually, or within a group, to research, plan, and improve educational practices

(14) Summer work related to an individual's field of teaching

(15) Planning and production of television or other special programs for use in the schools

(16) Additional kinds of experiences may be approved. Among these may be experiences especially appropriate for a particular school district or a particular educational area

Personnel within each local education agency charged with the responsibility of planning, implementing and/or approving a delivery system within

their local plan may find the following sources helpful. Each source has the potential of providing alternatives needed within a local education agency plan to meet both individual and institutional needs.

Delivery System Sources

Data Resource Bank (Computerized)

Regional Educational Service Center

State Department of Education

Cooperatives of Local Education Agencies

Oklahoma Universities of Higher Education

Oklahoma Educational Television

Classroom Teachers

Professional Organizations

The local education agency plan must be flexible yet at the same time meet state standards and other state, local and federal regulations and must be approved by the State Department of Education thirty (30) days prior to implementation.

D.4 Quality Assurance/Evaluation

The following elements shall be addressed in the district's inservice staff development plan quality assurance section.

(1) Provisions shall be made for the auditing of the various components of the plan to include:

a. Assigning responsibility to either a quality assurance person or to the Local Advisory Council for carrying out the function.

b. Reviewing the needs assessment technique(s) and instrument(s) to verify the comprehensiveness of the assessment.

c. Assuring that instruments used to evaluate are compatible with those used in the assessment.

d. Checking the priorities for possible further assessment, including

program priorities or mandates.

e. Reviewing planning to assure that objectives are based on identified needs; that resources were thoroughly investigated, there was involvement at different levels in deciding upon the most appropriate activities, and the activities selected show promise of improvement.

f. Assessing objectives for specificity, directness, and measurability. Measurements should be stated in terms of data or criteria.

g. Observing involvement of parents, school personnel, students, and others, including representatives of other agencies in the process.

h. Assessing the data collection plan to assure that the projected outcomes relate to the assessed needs and stated objectives.

i. Reviewing the sequential steps on which projected outcomes are based to assure that inservice staff development is appropriate to the next level of achievement needed by the staff and students.

j. Reviewing the participants' self-evaluations and any outside evaluation if used.

k. Assessing the costs of the program and relative costs and benefits of available alternatives, assuring that supplemental programs provide only supplemental inservice.

(2) Provisions shall be made for making recommendations to decision makers at the local level and dissemination of recommendations to others.

The local education agency shall be responsible for appropriate forms and records as required by the State Board of Education. Each local agency will maintain a filing and recordkeeping system.

D.5 Incentives/Rewards

Each local board of education should review recommendations of the Local Advisory Council and establish written policy specifying requirements, incentives or rewards for promoting professional growth of all staff through inservice. The local plan should include this policy statement. Some of the requirements/rewards/incentives as described in the following may be included in the policy statement.

Extrinsic

(1) The salary schedule recognizes additional training and experience

via schedule increments.

(2) Educators are encouraged to take course work at regular intervals.

(3) Non-teaching staff members are required to participate periodically in training situations pertinent to their role.

(4) Staff are sent to conferences and workshops with expenses paid.

(5) School workshops are conducted for the staff. Outside speakers/ consultants are provided for group meetings, including special interest group sessions.

(6) Articles calling attention to professional recognition attained by staff members appear in the local press.

(7) Capable and experienced staff members are assigned to work with new less experienced members.

(8) Staff members who do work are given promotions and responsibilities for which they receive increased pay.

(9) Individual educators are asked to report at faculty meetings on courses they have taken, speakers they have heard, education articles they have read, or other forms of educational improvement efforts they are involved in or aware of.

Intrinsic

(1) Educators who seek to improve the curriculum and/or other areas of the school appreciate being given an opportunity to do so.

(2) There is a natural desire to attain status which is sometimes satisfied by an additional degree or training. This desire can be stimulated by calling attention to the increase in the status of the school and pointing out that it also increases with the attainment of individual status.

(3) Educators desire to receive a salary which compares favorably with

other professions and thereby increases the status of the profession.

(4) Staff members desire to attain recognition for effective work accomplished.

(5) Staff members receive satisfaction from meaningful participation in decisions which affect their own work.

(6) Educators like to feel that they are part of a team working together for the common good--sharing both successes and failures.

(7) Staff members like to feel that their contributions and suggestions are appreciated.

(8) Educators appreciate being given opportunities to develop their own qualities of responsibility and leadership.

Following is a summation list of incentives that appear to be acceptable to most educators:

(1) The salary schedule is based upon training and experience and provides salary increments for academic accomplishments beyond the master's degree.

(2) Substitute service is provided for teachers attending professional meetings, and/or observing educational programs or teaching techniques in other school settings, both within and outside the school district.

(3) All staff are allowed to participate (via representatives) in the making of the salary schedule.

(4) Monetary compensation is provided to staff members for performing extra duties.

(5) Staff members are given financial assistance to attend out-of-town professional meetings.

(6) Educators are permitted to substitute travel, work, or other approved relevant experience for professional study required to maintain their

status on the salary schedule.

(7) Teachers are paid more for meritorious work done.

D.6 Funding/Fiscal Resources

The local staff development plan will include a section on funding and resource development. The plan will show how the identified needs will be met with monetary and human resources.

The plan will describe how various sources of local, state and federal funds will be coordinated to provide needed services and to avoid duplication. The local district will continue to explore other sources of revenue internal and external to the school district for supporting inservice activities which are beyond the current commitment of resources.